

PRESS RELEASE No. 23 / 22nd AU SUMMIT

EMAIL FROM THE FUTURE, ELECTION OF NEW CHAIRPERSON AND AWARDS TO PROMINENT AFRICANS MARK OPENING SESSION OF AFRICAN UNION ASSEMBLY MEETING



Addis Ababa, 30 January 2014- An “email from the future” delivered by African Union Commission Chairperson Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma has served to encourage Africa to continue its fifty year development agenda (Agenda 2063), with the confidence that it is possible for the continent to achieve prosperity, integration and peace within that time, or less.

Delivered during the opening of the 22nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, the email is written to a hypothetical “Kwame Nkrom” by “Nkosazana”.

Speaking from the year 2063, after the full implementation of Africa’s Agenda 2063, the email lauds the progress achieved in initiatives that are, at present, being pursued by Africa. These include programmes on achieving an integrated Africa, developing industry and manufacturing, advanced use of information and communication technologies, mastery over the oceans and their wealth, beneficiation of minerals and natural resources, intra African trade, and sufficient infrastructure. In her message to “Kwame”, “Nkosazana” talks about an Africa that has turned itself from an importer of food to a major exporter.

“My friend, Africa has indeed transformed herself from an exporter of raw materials with a declining manufacturing sector in 2013, to become a major

food exporter, a global manufacturing hub, a knowledge centre,” the email reads.

The Africa of 2063, according to the email, is no longer a dark continent but rather one which is lit up using hydro, solar, wind, and geo-thermal energy, in addition to fossil fuels. It is an Africa at peace with itself after having tackled the root causes of conflict. The email compliments the continent’s commitment to invest in its people, especially in the empowerment of young people and women, as being key issues that made peace happen. It mentions the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the formation of Organisation of African Unity held in May 2013 as having been the start of a major paradigm shift: a point where Africa took charge of its own narrative.

After reading her “email from the future”, the Chairperson sent a word of encouragement to all of Africa, that the contents of the email can be a reality. “It is impossible until it is done,” she concluded.

In the meantime, Dr Dlamini-Zuma announced the appointment of Mrs Binta Diop as Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, “to ensure that the voices of women and the vulnerable are heard much more clearly in peace-building and in conflict resolution”.

The opening session of the Assembly was also addressed by the Under Secretary General of the United Nations, who spoke about how the African Union and the United Nations can work together to address pressing crises and to build on Africa’s progress, announcing that “The United Nations is your unwavering partner” in the quest for advancement and growth.

The meeting, which elected President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz of Mauritania as the Chairperson of the African Union for the coming one year and Zimbabwe as the first Vice Chairperson, also heard from the newly elected President of the Republic of Madagascar Mr Rajonarimamniaina Rakotoarimanana who paid tribute to his country men and women for making the choice for the restoration of constitutional order and going to the ballot box to elect their leaders. He proclaimed a new dawn for development, peace and security in his country but also added the urgent need for vital assistance for the country to realize its full potential.

President Jacob Zuma of South Africa took the floor to express his country’s appreciation for Africa’s support during the death and burial of its former President Mr Nelson Mandela last year. He paid homage to other African countries for having supported and harboured not just the leadership of the struggle against apartheid, but also many other South African liberation fighters and activists.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti, Mr. Laurent Salvador Lamothe took to the stage to deliver the message of Haitian solidarity with Africa on behalf of the country’s President, Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Mr Hailemariam Desalegn gave his final address as Chairperson of the African Union before handing over to President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. A press release on the Prime Minister’s statement as well as the statement itself is available at www.au.int

The opening ceremony also saw the presentation of US\$100 000 prizes under the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards to two prominent African scientists; awards to Heads of State and Governments who have successfully championed the fights against malaria, launch of 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa and an acceptance statement by the incoming Chairperson of the African Union, President

Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. Press releases on all the events are also available at www.au.int as is the full list of the new bureau of the African Union.

WZM

For further information contact

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: dinfo@african-union.org
| Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow us

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>

Learn more at:

<http://www.au.int>